

Winchester District Traveller DPD

Traveller Site Assessment Methodology

July 2017



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report builds on the principles used to identify and recommend sites for allocation for housing development in the Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2), but modifies these to more appropriately reflect the nature of the sites to be assessed to accommodate travellers. The report forms part of the evidence base for the Traveller DPD and should be read in conjunction with other studies such as the Site Assessment Study undertaken by Peter Brett Associates (July 2016) and the Traveller Accommodation Assessment by Opinion Research Services (October 2016).
- 1.2 The Traveller DPD is required to identify sufficient sites to meet the provisions of Policy DM4 of LPP2 adopted April 2017.

2. Background & Context

Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (August 2015)

1. Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS), published in August 2015 requires Local Planning Authorities in plan making for gypsies and travellers to address the following:-
 - LPAs should set pitch and plot targets which address the permanent and transit site accommodation needs in their area
 - Identify and update annually a supply of specific, deliverable sites to provide 5 years worth of sites against locally set targets – years 1- 5 –
 - Identify supply of specific, deliverable sites or broad locations for growth for years 6-10 and where possible years 11-15
 - Consider production of joint plans to provide more flexibility in identifying sites particularly if an LPA has special or strict planning constraints across its area
 - Relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population's size and density
 - Protect local amenity and environment
2. The guidance goes on to stress that LPAs should also ensure that sites are sustainable economically, socially and environmentally and policies should:-
 - a) *promote peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community*
 - b) *promote, in collaboration with commissioners of health services, access to appropriate health services*
 - c) *ensure that children can attend school on a regular basis*
 - d) *provide a settled base that reduces both the need for long-distance travelling and possible environmental damage caused by unauthorised encampment*
 - e) *provide for proper consideration of the effect of local environmental quality (such as noise and air quality) on the health and well-being of*

any travellers that may locate there or on others as a result of new development

f) avoid placing undue pressure on local infrastructure and services

g) do not locate sites in areas at high risk of flooding, including functional floodplains, given the particular vulnerability of caravans

h) reflect the extent to which traditional lifestyles (whereby some travellers live and work from the same location thereby omitting many travel to work journeys) can contribute to sustainability.

3. The policies and principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) also apply to the consideration of traveller sites, para 4 states :-

4. This Framework should be read in conjunction with the government's planning policy for traveller sites. Local planning authorities preparing plans for and taking decisions on travellers sites should also have regard to the policies in this Framework so far as relevant.

Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy

4. LPP1 was adopted in March 2013 and sets out the development strategy for the Winchester District under Policy DS1 for the period 2011 – 2031. LPP1 also includes reference to its responsibilities as housing authority to assess and meet the needs of gypsies, travellers and traveling showpeople. Research at that time indicated a preference for smaller sites, suited to family groups dispersed around the District, to avoid a disproportionate impact on existing settlements and help encourage integration with the settled community.
5. Consequently, Policy CP5 of LPP1 sets out a number of matters to be taken into account when considering proposals and allocating sites:-

Policy CP5 - Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

The Local Planning Authority will undertake needs assessments (in Local Plan Part 2 or the South Downs Local Plan) to quantify the accommodation requirements for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople within the District.

Sites will be allocated and planning permission will be granted for sites to meet the objectively assessed accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople, providing they meet all of the following criteria:-

Sites should be well related to existing communities to encourage social inclusion and sustainable patterns of living, while being located so as to minimise tension with the settled community and:-

- avoid sites being over-concentrated in any one location or disproportionate in size to nearby communities;*
- be accessible to local services such as schools, health and community services but avoid placing an unreasonable burden on local facilities and services;*
- avoid harmful impacts on nearby residential properties by noise and light, vehicle movements and other activities.*

Sites should be clearly defined by physical features, where possible, and not unduly intrusive. Additional landscaping may be necessary to maintain visual amenity and provide privacy for occupiers. This and any security measures should respect local landscape character;

Sites should be capable of accommodating the proposed uses to acceptable standards and provide facilities appropriate to the type and size of the site, including:-

- *water supply, foul water drainage and recycling/waste management;*
- *provision of play space for children;*
- *sites for travelling showpeople should include space for storing and maintaining equipment;*
- *safe vehicular access from the public highway and adequate provision for parking, turning and safe manoeuvring of vehicles within the site (taking account of site size and impact);*
- *in rural locations, any permanent built structures should be restricted to essential facilities such as a small amenity block.*

Proposals should be consistent with other policies such as on design, flood risk, contamination, protection of the natural and built environment or agricultural land quality and protect areas designated for their local, national, or international importance, such as Gaps and the South Downs National Park.

Existing permanent authorised gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople sites within the District which are needed to meet the identified needs of particular groups will be retained for the use of these groups unless it has been established that they are no longer required.

6. This policy provides a baseline on which to assess existing sites and their potential for expansion and to identify new ones to allocate through the Traveller DPD, to meet the identified needs set out in adopted Local Plan part 2.

Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and Development Management

7. LPP2 was adopted in April 2017, following an examination in July 2016. The Inspector considering the representations to LPP2 specifically advised the Council that the plan should include a policy setting out the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. Consequently Policy DM4 was incorporated into the plan and states :

Policy DM4 – Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpersons

Planning permission will be granted for pitches to meet the accommodation needs identified for the area covered by this Plan for people falling within the definition of ‘travellers’, of about 15 gypsy/traveller pitches and about 24 travelling showpeople’s plots between 2016 and 2031.

Sites will be identified and consent granted as necessary to meet identified traveller needs in the Plan area which could not otherwise be met, subject to the criteria outlined in Policy CP5. Proposals for transit sites will be considered on an individual basis, following the criteria of CP5

8. Stage 1 - Initial Site Sieving

- 8.1 The site assessment study (PBA) provides an initial assessment of both existing sites in use for travelling purposes and potential sites in public ownership that may be considered suitable, if additional sites are required to be allocated through the DPD process.
- 8.2 A Call for Sites was initiated through the LPP2 process and whilst some sites were identified as suitable for traveller purposes, circumstances changed which meant that these were removed from consideration. A further Call for Sites was advertised with the Commencement Notice for the DPD in October 2016, this generated 4 submissions, the sites submitted were either already in active traveller use or subject to current planning proposals.
- 8.3 The accommodation needs assessment report (ORS) in addition to establishing the overall need for traveller sites across the District also identifies site specific needs, both currently and in 5 years, to reflect those families that fall within the revised definition of travellers i.e are still travelling.
- 8.4 Policy DM4 establishes a requirement for both gypsies and travellers (15 pitches) and travelling showpeople (24 plots) in recognition that there are different site specific requirements of these travelling communities.
- 8.5 Following publication of the Commencement Notice and receipt of enquiries as to the realistic availability of the sites recorded as owned by both Hampshire County Council and Winchester City Council. The council confirmed that neither sites or premises owned by Winchester or Hampshire were available for traveller purposes on the basis that they were required to be retained.
- 8.6 The initial site search therefore focusses on those sites already occupied by travellers or being promoted for traveller occupation.
- 8.7 In addition to being suitable for traveller occupation, sites will also need to be available and achievable. The following therefore establishes matters to be considered :-

	Issues to consider
Availability	<p>Does the site have permanent planning permission – is the site occupied/vacant; do the occupants comply with the revised definition of travellers; is there an identified need</p> <p>Does the site have temporary planning permission</p> <p>Land ownership</p> <p>Legal constraints – tenancies; multiple ownerships; ransom strips</p>
Achievability	<p>Whether the site have any constraints to delivery that cannot be mitigated</p> <p>Alternative land uses/remediation work required</p> <p>Affordability/viability</p>
Suitability – Criteria in Policy CP5	
Sites should be well related to existing communities to encourage social inclusion and sustainable patterns of living, while being located so as to minimise tension with the settled community/ be accessible to local services such as schools, health and community services but avoid placing an unreasonable burden on local facilities and services	<p>Proximity to a settlement listed under Policy WT1; SH1; MTRA2/3 to allow access to key facilities particularly education/health</p> <p>Whether public transport is available</p>
avoid sites being over-concentrated in any one location or disproportionate in size to nearby communities	Whether the site size is appropriate for the local context in relation to local infrastructure ; the local environment and settled population
avoid harmful impacts on nearby residential properties by noise and light, vehicle movements and other activities	Whether neighbouring uses are likely to be affected by travellers in terms of light, visual impact, noise, general disturbance
Sites should be clearly defined by physical features, where possible, and not unduly intrusive.	<p>Retain any existing landscape features</p> <p>Consider further landscaping and boundary treatment</p> <p>Consider wider landscape impact</p>

<p>Sites should be capable of accommodating the proposed uses to acceptable standards</p> <p>sites for travelling showpeople should include space for storing and maintaining equipment</p>	<p>Determine minimum plot/pitches sizes and associated requirements and if these can be adequately accommodated on the site</p> <p>Whether existing access is suitable for size of vehicles</p>
<p>water supply, foul water drainage and recycling/waste management</p>	<p>Assess existing provision on site/ in the locality can this serve the proposal</p>
<p>provision of play space for children</p>	<p>Whether the scale of the proposal requires specific on site provision</p> <p>Existing provision in the vicinity of the site</p>
<p>safe vehicular access from the public highway and adequate provision for parking, turning and safe manoeuvring of vehicles within the site (taking account of site size and impact)</p>	<p>Whether the access is suitable for exiting/proposed no of plots/pitches to allow for manoeuvring, storage and parking</p> <p>Potential for vehicle/pedestrian conflict are there local footpaths</p>
<p>in rural locations, any permanent built structures should be restricted to essential facilities such as a small amenity block</p>	<p>Requirement for permanent structures – siting to minimise impact</p> <p>Opportunity to re-use of any existing buildings on site</p>
<p>Proposals should be consistent with other policies such as on design, flood risk, contamination, protection of the natural and built environment or agricultural land quality and protect areas designated for their local, national, or international importance, such as Gaps and the South Downs National Park*</p> <p><i>*this DPD will not cover that part of the Winchester District in the SDNP</i></p>	<p>Whether there are any statutory or local designations affecting the site:</p> <p>SPA/SAC SSSI/SINC NNR/LNR Listed Building/SAM Registered Park/Gardens/conservation area</p> <p>If site lies within an area prone to flooding – flood zone 2/3</p> <p>Is there any local evidence of flooding/flooding issues affecting the site and its surroundings</p> <p>If site lies within a designated local gap – Policy CP18</p>

8.8 Therefore, all existing and proposed sites have been subjected to an initial high level RAG (Red, Amber, Green) assessment, against a list of key considerations to indicate whether a site is suitable and scored accordingly :

Red (absolute constraint – no mitigation possible),

Amber (some constraints – consider mitigation)

Green (no constraints)

. The key considerations are as follows:

- Natural designations,
- Historic designations,
- Presence of mineral resources,
- Trees and planting,
- Overhead power cables,
- Water courses and flooding,
- Power cables and pipelines,
- Designated settlement gap,
- Highway access,

8.9 The RAG assessment (Appendix A) recognised that the presence of one or more of the considerations may, or may not, render the site unsuitable for traveller use ; that some matters can be mitigated whilst others may be more fundamental and have a detrimental impact on the suitability of a site; and that some matters may only affect part of a site.

8.10 This process did not therefore eliminate any sites at this stage but flagged those with issues needing further investigation.

9. Stage 2 – Site Based Assessments

9.1 Sites were also subjected to an initial sustainability appraisal (SA), which is published on WCC's website.

9.2 The initial SA seeks to identify the likely significant effects on the environment, economic and social factors of the sites. The SA uses a framework of objectives for sustainable development as the basis for appraisal using baseline evidence and professional opinion. The SA process indicates where development could have a negative effect, for example result in the loss of a site of interest for nature conservation, and suggests ways of avoiding or mitigating significant negative effects, such as the need for the layout to respect and be designed around protected trees. The SA process also indicates where development can have positive effects such as providing accommodation for sectors of the community.

9.3 Where matters were flagged either through the Initial SA or the RAG assessment these were subject to more detailed analysis:.

Transport Assessment

- 9.4 Access to each of the sites was assessed to highlight any known or potential issues. These assessments focused on existing data already provided through submissions of planning applications.
- 9.5 Site assessments sheets are provided for each site and record potential number of traveller pitches/plots and trip generations. The results for these can be viewed on the Councils website.

Landscape Appraisal

- 9.6 The Landscape Appraisal follows established methodologies, based on published city and county council documents.
- 9.7 Each site was appraised through the Site Assessment Study (PBA) and categorised regarding their landscape sensitivity as either most, highly, moderately or least sensitive. The appraisal describes the key reasons leading to their categorisation and summarises the features of the location under the headings of context, character, important or panoramic views, skyline features and landmarks.
- 9.8 There were several elements which combined to give the overall sensitivity ratings. These were the physical landscape – landform and land cover (including agricultural land quality); experiential / perceptual (including enclosure, intimacy, tranquillity and the existence of footpaths enabling access and enjoyment); historic environment (including the existence of ancient woodland and parkland); biodiversity; and visibility.

Historic Environment Assessment

- 9.9 Each site was also subjected to an assessment which considered the heritage assets affecting the site. This provided a greater level of detail and knowledge than the initial site sieve RAG assessment. Sites where the archaeological potential is unknown were recorded as requiring further assessment.

10. Stage 3 – Preferred Sites

- 10.1 During this process it became clear that due to the lack of alternative sites being presented for consideration, the focus of the Council's strategy would be to utilise existing sites.
- 10.2 Therefore, the proposed strategy for site selection explores the following principles:
- Safeguard existing authorised sites – the site will continue to be safeguarded for as long as the need exists for traveller accommodation.
 - Assess all temporary consents and determine whether these are suitable to be granted a permanent permission (where occupants comply with revised definition)

- Assess all unauthorised sites and determine whether these are suitable to be granted a permanent permission (where occupants comply with revised definition)
- Assess all permanent sites (where occupants comply with revised definition) and determine if they have capacity for expansion particularly if there is an identified need;
- Assess any vacant sites or unimplemented planning permissions to safeguard for future use.
- Identify any new/additional sites

Gypsy and Traveller/Travelling Showpeople – Site Assessment Matrix

Site Ref	Address	Natural Designations	Historic Designations	Presence of mineral resources	Trees and planting	Overhead power cables	Water courses and flooding	Gaps	Proximity to services	Highway access	Contamination
W001	The Ranch, Old Mill Lane								2.5km to Denmead	Single track	
W002	Ash Farm, Titchfield Lane, Wickham			mca					2.5/3km Wickham/Fareham/Whiteley		
W003	Westfork, Bunns Lane, Hipley, Hambledon			mca					3.5km to Denmead		
W004	Joymount Farm, Curdridge Lane, Curdridge								1.5km Waltham Chase 3km Bishop's Waltham		
W005	Ashbrook Stables, Main Road, Colden Common								Colden Common 0.5km, Fair Oak/Eastleigh 3km,		
W006	Barn Farm Caravan Park, The Lakes, Swanmore (aka Buena Vista)			mca					0.5km Denmead 1.5km Waltham Chase 3km Bishop's Waltham		
W007	Windy Ridge, Old Mill Lane Denmead								2.5km to Denmead	single track	
W008	Travellers Rest, Appledown Lane, Bishops Sutton								New Alresford 0.5km		
W009	Rambling Renegade, Prickett's Hill (Greenacres ?)								Waltham Chase 2.5km, Bishop's Waltham 5km		
W010	Land opposite Woodward Farm, Alma Lane, Upham (aka Fordean Stud)								Bishop's Waltham 3km		
W011	Riverside, adj Chapel House, Highbridge Road, Highbridge			mca					Chandler's Ford 1.5km		
W012	Big Muddy Farm, Alma Lane, Upham								Bishop's Waltham 3km		
W013	Land west of Lasek, Bishops Wood Road, Mislingford								Wlatham Chase 1.5km, Swanmore 1km		
W014	The Piggeries, (1-4 The Piggeries) Firgrove Lane, North			mca					Denmead/Fareham 5km Waltham Chase 6km		
W015	Cushty Tan, Bishops Wood Road, Wickham								Wlatham Chase 1.5km, Swanmore 1km		
W016	Tynefield, Fareham			mca					Locks Heath 2km Fareham 3km		

Site Ref	Address	Natural Designations	Historic Designations	Presence of mineral resources	Trees and planting	Overhead power cables	Water courses and flooding	Gaps	Proximity to services	Highway access	Contamination
W017	Ourlands, land East of Mayles Lane, Knowle								Fareham 3km		
W018	Stablewood Farm, The Lakes, Swanmore			mca					0.5km Demead 1.5km Waltham Chase 3km Bishop's Waltham		
W019	The Old Piggery, Firgrove Lane, North Boarunt			mca					Denmead/Fareham 5km Waltham Chase 6km		
W081	Land Rear of "Danube", The Withy Bed, North Boarhunt								Denmead/Fareham 5km Waltham Chase 6km		
W082	Beacon Haven, Brickyard Road, Swanmore								Waltham Chase 1km Swanmore 1km		
W083	Bowen Farm, Wangfield lane, Curdridge			mca					Hedge End 3.5km		
W084	Little Ranch, Portsmouth Road, Fishers Pond			mca					Colden Common 2km Fair Oak 2.5km		
W085	Gravel Hill, Swanmore								Waltham Chase 1.5km Swanmore 15km		
W086	Woodley Farm, Alma Lane, Lower Upham								Bishop's Waltham 3km		
Travelling show persons sites											
W020	Carousel Park								Micheldever 4km, Kingsworthy 10km		
W021	The Haven, Denmead								2.5km to Denmead	single track	
W022	The Orchard, Forest Road Swanmore (aka Orchard Drive)								Waltham Chase 1km Swanmore 1km		
W023	Plot 1 The Nurseries, Shedfield			mca					Waltham Chase 2km Wickham 2.5km		
W024	Plot 2 The Nurseries, Shedfield			mca					Waltham Chase 2km Wickham 2.5km		
W025	Plot 5 The Nurseries, Shedfield			mca					Waltham Chase 2km Wickham 2.5km		
W026	Grig Ranch, Wickham			mca					Wickham 1.5km Fareham 4km		
W027	The Bungalow, Soutwick Road, North Boarhunt								Denmead/Fareham 5km Waltham Chase 6km		
W028	Stokes Yard, Waltham Chase								Waltham Chase 0.5km		
W029	The Vardo, Swanmore								Swanmore 0.5km		

Site Ref	Address	Natural Designations	Historic Designations	Presence of mineral resources	Trees and planting	Overhead power cables	Water courses and flooding	Gaps	Proximity to services	Highway access	Contamination
W030	Firgrove Lane, North Boarhunt								Denmead/Fareham 5km Waltham Chase 6km		
W032a	Plot 3 The Nurseries, Shedfield			mca					Wlatham Chase 2km Wickham 2.5km		
W032b	Plot 4 The Nurseries, Shedfield			mca					Wlatham Chase 2km Wickham 2.5km		
W032c	Plot 6 The Nurseries, Shedfield			mca					Wlatham Chase 2km Wickham 2.5km		
W032d	Plot 7 The Nurseries, Shedfield			mca					Wlatham Chase 2km Wickham 2.5km		
W081	Caravan 2&3 Firgrove Lane, North Boarhunt								Denmead/Fareham 5km Waltham Chase 6km		